

Executive Host Information 2005
Placement Week November 15-19, 2004

Office Name: NMFS Office of Science and Technology - Assessment and Monitoring Division
National Observer Program

Position Title: National Observer Program Assistant

How many total staff are in your immediate office / branch? (Select one option, mark with X)

1-5	
6-10	X
> 10	

Have you previously hosted a Sea Grant fellow (Select one option, mark with X)

Yes	
No	X

If yes, how many?

If fellow is currently on assignment, please provide contact information.

Name	
Tel	
Email	

Does your office accept non-United States (foreign) citizens? (Select one option, mark with X)

Yes	X
No	

NOAA Fisheries Mission Statement: Stewardship of living marine resources for the benefit of the Nation through their science-based conservation and management and promotion of the health of their environment.

Organizational Overview

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) within the Department of Commerce. The Office of Science and Technology is part of NMFS and is composed of a Directorate and five Divisions: (1) **Assessment and Monitoring**; (2) Fisheries Statistics; (3) Economics and Social Analysis; (4) Science Information; and (5) Marine Ecosystems. The National Observer Program resides in the Assessment and Monitoring Division.

Brief Overview of Your Office's work:

The **National Observer Program** provides a formalized mechanism for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to address fisheries observer issues of national importance and to develop policies and procedures to ensure that NMFS observers and observer programs are fully supported. The policies must reflect the diverse needs of our regional observer programs while enhancing data quality and achieving consistency in key areas of national importance. Fisheries

observers are deployed in at least 42 different fisheries around the U.S, out of NMFS' regional offices. There is a high degree of coordination between the regional programs and the national program to develop policies and procedures that can be implemented in all NMFS observer programs to improve the quality of data collected, to increase program efficiency and effectiveness, and to provide critical support and training for observers. More information on the National Observer Program and NMFS regional observer programs can be found at: <http://www.st.nmfs.gov/st1/nop/>.

Do you have partnership projects, multi-agency workgroups, or working relationships with other offices? Please list.

Interact/partner with other NMFS HQ Offices, Regional Offices and Science Centers
Interact/partner with other NOAA Lines Offices
Interact/partner with other Federal/state agencies and commissions

Assignment Description.

TASK: There are several possible projects available to the perspective Sea Grant fellow to gain experience in policy development, national program planning, regional coordination, and outreach. In coordination with the National Observer Program Team Leader, the fellow may be responsible for the following projects, or may choose to work on other observer-related projects that meet the program's objectives:

POLICY

- Coordinating the development of materials to support proposed statutory language to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Act with respect to industry funding, agency policy on confidentiality of and access to observer data, and the definition of an observer.
- Coordinating the development of policy regarding the most appropriate application of various fishery dependent data collection techniques.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND COORDINATION

- Organizing a national workshop to review sampling bias and identify logistical constraints to meeting sampling objectives.
- Refining and implementing a plan to harmonize all sources of NMFS observer data (e.g., integrating data products with the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) and the Fisheries Information System (FIS)).
- Support for the revision of the Observer Health and Safety regulations including developing and implementing public hearings and preparing responses to comments.

OUTREACH

- Display and presentation of observer data and observer program operations information.
- Working with a contractor on developing and implementing outreach strategies.
- Developing outreach materials on NMFS observer programs for distribution as printed materials, video materials or on the agency's various observer-related websites.

Estimated fellow Travel, Out-of-Office: (Select one option, mark with X)

0 days / month	
1-3 days / month	
4-7 days / month	
8-10 days / month	
> 2 weeks / month	
(Variable)	X

Estimated DC-Area Travel: (Select one option, mark with X)

0 days / month	
1-3 days / month	X
4-7 days / month	
8-10 days / month	
> 2 weeks / month	

Does this position require mandatory skills: (Select one option, mark with X)

Yes	
No	X

Desired Background Skills: Please list. (e.g. strong written / communication skills, knowledge of Microsoft PowerPoint software, etc.).

The candidate should be self-motivated and able to work effectively with regional staff located throughout the country
The candidate's interest is more important than their educational track. Relevant interest would be in the area of fishery dependent data collection techniques, monitoring of fisheries catch and/or bycatch of protected species (marine mammals, sea birds, sea turtles), and public education regarding marine resource issues. Prior experience as an observer, or willingness to train and deploy as an observer is highly encouraged.

The variety of projects available provides many opportunities to apply and develop technical, analytical, organizational, and writing skills.